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WHICH WILL HAVE HIM?

A Vaudeville, in One Act.

BY JOHN A. WOODWARD.

BOSTON:
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SPENCER'S UNIVERSAL STAGE. NO. LXII.

WHICH WILL HAVE HIM?

Vaudeville,

IN ONE ACT AND ONE SCENE.

TRANSLATED AND ADAPTED

By JOHN A. WOODWARD.

BOSTON:
CHARLES H. SPENCER, Agent.
1871.

PS635
.29W8985

WHICH WILL HAVE HIM?

CHARACTERS.

DONNA SYLVIA DE TORRELLAS.

LA PRINCESS NADEYE TCHERNILOFF.

LE VICOMTE MAURICE DE TRANY.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1871,
By CHARLES H. SPENCER, AGENT,
In the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

WHICH WILL HAVE HIM?

SCENE. *A salon in the Kursaal at Ems. — Double doors,* C., *through which is seen a park. — Window,* R.; *doors,* R. *and* L.; *sofa,* R.; *stand* R., *near sofa; table,* L., *on which are papers and writing materials.*

PRINCESS *discovered, walking with slow, measured steps. — Glass of water in her hand.*

Princess. Truly, this Ems water has marvellous virtues. The more you drink the more you want. The first glass was very disagreeable, the second very insipid — but little by little I have become so accustomed to it that, if I should be deprived of it to-day I should be in despair. My physician's directions must be followed with perfectly mathematical regularity. My future husband wishes it, he desires it, he demands it! (*she drinks*), and I try to show him a blind submission — before marriage, you understand; afterwards we shall see. (*Walking, and counting her steps.*) Let me continue my regimental walk, — one — two — three — four —

Sylvia (*entering,* C., *and stopping at door*). I don't understand this. What do I see — a lunatic? No! (*To* PRINCESS.) Stop! You make me nervous. (*Coming forward precipitately.*) The coolness of this official almost drives me mad. (*Sits down violently at table,* R., *and looks at* PRINCESS *through eye-glass.*)

Princess (*aside*). Goodness! what avalanche is this? One — two — three — four —

Sylvia. At last I am at Ems. I began to think I should *never* get here. The scenery on the road was superb — at least they say so, and I believe them. For my part, I can't admire scenery when I am alone. I kept calling to the coachman, Faster, faster! He spoke softly to his horses in German; and the more I scolded the more the beasts — that is, the man and the horses — laughed be-

tween themselves at my fury. It will certainly make me gray-headed — fifty years from now. (*Looking through eye-glass at* PRINCESS, *who continues her walk.*) That lady seems to have discovered perpetual motion. I must find out if Lord Maurice de Trany is still here. The list of strangers must be in some of these papers. (*She examines papers rapidly, and as rapidly rejects them.*) It is not in that — nor that — nor that! (*Throws them in a heap on the floor.*)

Princess (*aside, very calmly*). That person seems to have very irritable nerves. How I pity her. One — two — three — four —

Sylvia (*aside*). That can't be a woman. It is a sentinel of the German Confederation in disguise, or else a clockmaker. (*Swinging eye-glass like a pendulum.*) Tic-tac, tic-tac! How comical; how foolish. Aside from her peculiar style of locomotion, she seems very nice. She ought to have all Ems at her feet. Perhaps she can give me the information I desire. (*Placing herself in front of the* PRINCESS, *who is forced to stop.*) Madame, you have before you a person very awkward, very stupid, and very badly brought up. I want to warn you of it beforehand. I know that in Europe, in a certain class, I ought not to speak to people without being introduced; but I take advantage of my being a Peruvian to forget these formalities — when they don't suit me.

Princess. Your frankness pleases me. (*Aside.*) Very sympathetic — very!

Sylvia. You will make me a thousand times happy, madame, if you will permit me to ask you a few questions.

Princess (*sitting down*). Speak without fear, madame.

Sylvia (*sitting down*). I know that life at these watering places differs essentially from the aristocratic life in your grand cities of Europe, and that one admits to confidence here those whom they would not recognize at St. Petersburg or Paris. I say St. Petersburg or Paris, because you are certainly either Russian or French.

Princess. I am a Russian.

Sylvia. In the middle of last summer, Paris, where I had been staying several months, became suddenly deserted. No more luxury, no more toilettes, no more drives; nothing but the dust raised by the great feet of frightful countrymen in holiday costumes. My astonishment was extreme. I soon learned that, at that time, every one with name, fortune, or talents took to themselves wings and flew to Germany, to alight at Baden, Hamburg, or especially Ems. I resolved to follow the general emigration, and here I am, here I arrive — too soon, too late, or just right?

Princess. Well, madame, the season is pretty well advanced. We can still offer you, however, a good number of margraves, landgraves, and burgraves, — each one graver than the other, — and a decently presentable assortment of golden-haired ladies, with green cloaks and blue gloves.

Sylvia. Pardon me, in this rapid enumeration you have forgotten France.

Princess. At this moment Paris is not represented at all, and

France but very little. Two or three sleepy magistrates, a notary, several migratory pianists, and a few good citizens — I believe that is all.

Sylvia (*aside*). Maurice is gone.

Princess (*aside*). I don't see the necessity of speaking of Maurice.

Sylvia. What, not one of those elegant gentlemen that all the capitals send to Paris?

Princess (*rising*). O, dear, here I am sitting when the hour for my third glass has sounded.

Sylvia (*aside*). She is going on guard again.

Princess. Excuse me, madame, I have a solemn duty to perform; I have not a moment to lose; I run, I fly — what unpardonable forgetfulness! One — two — three — four — [*Exit, counting her steps.*

Sylvia. That is a new manner of locomotion to me. It is very apparent that that young lady was born very far from the sun, but that does not prevent her from being very charming. Let me see those papers again. Ah, a comic paper. (*Reading.*) "It is our painful duty to announce the death of—" O, dear! (*Taking another paper.*) How is this? "Aphorism: Try to love women who dress plainly, when you have to pay for the dresses yourself." Humbug! "The ball at the Kursaal was splendid—" What do I see! (*Rising suddenly.*) "The chief topic of conversation is the approaching marriage of the handsome Princess Wadjedo Tchermiloff with a young Frenchman — Le Vicomte Maurice de Trany." He, Maurice, to be married to another when I have his word, when I love him — for I do love him. I thought at first I did not care for him, but that paragraph in the paper shows me more fully the state of my heart. Infamy! Perfidy! So this is the secret of your absence; so this is why you did not answer my letters, in which I wrote so much tender foolishness. This insult will cost you dear, sir. So you think you can play with Sylvia de Torrelles like a school girl. Don't flatter yourself. I have the blood of the Incas and the Spaniard in my veins, and when I am insulted I have my revenge! But let me be calm, and write this monster a letter worthy of my indignation. (*Sits at table, and writes.*) "Monsieur, I know all! Be warned! I will horsewhip you — you and your Russian princess — wherever I may meet you. I do *not* salute you. Sylvia de Torrelles." O, dear! that's too flat, too much like rose-water. (*Tears letter.*)

Enter PRINCESS, C., *carrying large glass of spring water.*

Princess. You see, madame, I have returned.

Sylvia (*not hearing her, keeps on writing*). "You are a perfectly faithless brute!" There, that is more expressive.

Princess (*aside*). She does not hear me. How agitated she appears. (*She puts the glass on stand, and approaches* SYLVIA.)

Sylvia (*writing*). "I despise you more than I have ever loved you, so judge—" (*Rising impatiently.*) It's no use; I can't ex-

press myself in a letter, nor paint my indignation. I must tell him myself what I think of him, and give him a piece of my mind. I will beard the lion in his den! (*Perceives the glass of water, and drinks.*) Bah! That's awful!

Princess. That's my glass of water, if you please.

Sylvia (*imitating*). Excuse me, madame, I have a solemn duty to perform! I have not a moment to lose! I run! I fly!

[*Exit, impetuously*, C.

Princess. Well, that style of motion is altogether new to me. Where can Maurice be? After having read that article in the paper speaking of us, to avoid the epigrams of our enemies, and the jokes of our friends, I told him not to come to the spring; but cannot he guess that I am in the saloon? Really, one has to tell the men everything now; they have no ideas of their own. (*Opens window, and looks out.*)

Enter SYLVIA, *quickly.*

Sylvia. He is not at home. He has gone to ride on horseback. To ride, when I have travelled three hundred miles to see him! when I come to overwhelm him with reproaches — perhaps to scratch his eyes out!

Princess (*leaving window*). Nobody. (*Seeing* SYLVIA.) Already returned?

Sylvia. Ah, madame, I am very unhappy.

Princess. Unhappy! You?

Sylvia. Yes, madame. I will come straight to the point. As I said before, dissimulation is not my forte. I firmly believe in sympathy. I have seen you only a moment, and something tells me that our meeting was providential. You are young, you are pretty; you have loved, and you probably love at this moment. Have pity on me; come to my aid. My only hope is in you.

Princess (*aside*). What, love in that rattle-brain? (*Aloud.*) Speak, my dear, and use me —

Sylvia. The traitor! I did not believe I loved him so. I shall die —

Princess. O, gracious! You are pale, you are ill! (SYLVIA *falls on sofa.*)

Sylvia. It's nothing — a little faint —

Princess. Smell these salts. (*Aside.*) Hysterics imminent. (*Aloud.*) I must call —

Sylvia (*rising quickly*). No, no! Let no one be witness to a shameful moment of weakness. He would be too proud, the monster, if he knew I had cried for a moment.

Princess (*sitting by* SYLVIA). Calm yourself.

Sylvia. You are too good. I will open my heart to you. Listen. Young, rich, a widow, I had all of which a woman could dream, when I was seized with an unfortunate desire to come to Europe and learn what you call good breeding. All doors were opened to me — or rather my money; party succeeded party; I began to get used to your customs. One evening, especially, I waltzed several

times with the same gentleman. The next day they told me that I had committed an enormous offence; that I had compromised myself, and that my marriage with my waltzer was necessary. I did not understand how three waltzes could have so much weight, but as the gentleman was very good looking, and in good society, I was easily persuaded; so this indispensable marriage was arranged, and my lover left me to visit one of his castles, where we were to pass our honeymoon. (*During this speech she picks up, and mechanically folds the paper that she had thrown on the floor.*)

Princess. How charming — that is, so far.

Sylvia. Yes; but see the reverse of the medal. He left me, and I have not seen him since.

Princess. Truly?

Sylvia. For three months. O, these men!

Princess. O, these men!

Sylvia. I waited without too much impatience. I made several visits; I went to the races, when a charitable friend came to see me, and said, "My dear Sylvia, we see you everywhere. Now that you are to marry, it is wrong — it is very wrong. You must stay at home, or publicly disavow the marriage." Not knowing what part to take, I took flight. During the journey I reflected. I began to think that I did not love my fiancée so very much after all, but, on reading this paper, I find that I was mistaken. On learning that he has deceived me, my love has shown itself immense! eternal! ferocious!

Princess (*taking the paper, and rising*). This paper, did you say?

Sylvia (*tranquilly*). Yes; it speaks of the marriage of Maurice de Trany.

Princess (*falling in chair*, L.). Ah!

Sylvia. Ah! (*Both sigh dolefully.* — SYLVIA, *after a short pause, observes* PRINCESS.) You are ill, also.

Princess (*feebly*). Ah, I shall die!

Sylvia (*rising and going to her*). Smell these salts. It's nothing; only too lively emotion. (*Aside.*) Talk to me of new made friends. Poor girl, how the story of my woes affects her. (*Aloud.*) Do you feel better?

Princess (*pushing her away*). Leave me, madame! Don't come near me!

Sylvia. Don't you know me? I am your friend.

Princess. Rather my enemy, my rival! I hate you!

Sylvia. My rival? Are you the Princess Tchermiloff?

Princess. Yes.

Sylvia. How about sympathy now! Tell me —

Princess. You know all you need to know — that is, that I am to be married to Maurice de Trany.

Sylvia. We will see about that.

Princess. I hope that you will show yourself sufficiently well-bred to return immediately to Paris, or somewhere else, as you choose.

Sylvia. Yes, yes, my fine Muscovite. You think to get rid of Donna Sylvia de Torrelles too easily. You don't know that I have the blood of the Incas and the Spaniard in my veins; that I am as proud and jealous as one, and savage and implacable as the other. By my ancestors, why don't you advise me at once to take the veil or commit suicide, like the heroines of romance. Beware of me! I have beak and talons both. I bite, break, or tear, as you choose.

Princess. So you remain here?

Sylvia. Exactly.

Princess. You forget the absurdity of your position — rejected, abandoned —

Sylvia. Bah!

Princess. What, no shame?

Sylvia. What do you wish? I have no foolish pride.

Princess. Do you court noise and scandal?

Sylvia. I shall not fly from them — that is all.

Princess. Well, so be it — noise and scandal. *I* would brave all for love of Maurice, and for him I will battle with you till death.

Sylvia. As you please.

Princess. For he is mine — all mine.

Sylvia. And mine, too.

Princess. After all, it is so much the worse for you, if you did not know how to keep the love of the man that you adore.

Sylvia. Stop! You make me pity you when I hear you speak of trying to dispute Maurice with me. You — poor frozen flower — ha, ha! Do you know that at eight years of age, when you played with dolls, I played with serpents; at ten, I chased eagles to the summit of the Cordilleras; at twelve I hunted tigers; at fifteen —

Princess. I don't want to know what you did at fifteen.

Sylvia. How — sarcastic?

Princess. As you please.

Sylvia. So, you insult me?

Princess. And you — what have you been doing for ten minutes?

Sylvia. Let us finish this ridiculous conversation. This is my last word. I swear that, I living, you shall not marry Maurice!

Princess. And this my last. I swear that, while I live, Maurice shall not be your husband!

Sylvia. O, if you only had the courage! if you were only in the torrid zone, we'd soon settle this. The weapons would soon be decided between us, and —

Princess. What, a duel? Just the thing. I accept.

Sylvia. When shall we fight?

Princess. Now.

Sylvia. I give you the choice of arms.

Princess. Pistols, if you please.

Sylvia. I can drop a bird on the wing.

Princess. I am glad of it.

Sylvia. That is enough. I will get the weapons. (*Goes to door*, C., *and returns.*) It is a duel to the death, you know.

Princess (*coldly*). Yes, since I hope to kill you.

Sylvia. Only try. [*Exit*, C.

Princess. Here is an example of sympathy. This young woman pleased me at first; now she is my mortal enemy. O, Maurice! Maurice! while you are calmly riding, you little think that I am risking my life for your love. I did not know how dear you were, until this little fool came to dispute your heart with me.

Enter SYLVIA, *with two large pistols wrapped up in a lace handkerchief.*

Sylvia. Here I am, madam. I have just bought these pistols in the Kursaal. I hope you will believe me when I tell you that I have known them, even by sight, only for a moment.

Princess (*calmly*). I believe you, madame.

Sylvia (*offering pistols*). For the rest, you can examine them.

Princess (*drawing back*). They are not loaded, are they?

Sylvia. Are you afraid?

Princess. No. But —

Sylvia. They are not loaded. I have got the powder and balls in my pocket.

Princess (*aside*). That is less dangerous.

Sylvia. What did you say?

Princess. Nothing.

Sylvia. How shall we regulate the combat?

Princess. As you wish.

Sylvia. We will place ourselves at fifteen paces —

Princess. That's rather far.

Sylvia. And walk towards each other.

Princess. I would rather run.

Sylvia. Well, run then, if you choose. We will fire at will.

Princess. I accept.

Sylvia. As to the place, you must decide. I don't know the country. Where shall we go?

Princess. To the ruins of the old castle. The place will suit admirably.

Sylvia. Then for the ruins. Forward!

Princess (*calmly*). Forward! (*Hesitating.*) I beg you pardon, I wish —

Sylvia (*proudly*). To offer an apology? I won't accept —

Princess (*proudly*). An apology! What do you take me for, madame? I only wish to get my furs, which are in the next room. I am very careful of my health, and I may take cold without them.

Sylvia (*ironically*). How is this, madame?

Princess. Understand me. I am willing to die, or rather to kill you, but I will not run the risk of catching cold, and perhaps be deprived of going to the ball next Saturday. [*Exit into room*, R.

Sylvia (*looking into room*). Not the least emotion. These northern women are strange. She is brave, or she must love him sincerely.

Enter PRINCESS, *with furs on.*

Princess. Now we can go.

Sylvia. I am ready. (*They go to door*, C., *and stop.*)

Princess. I was thinking —

Sylvia. I too. If we should be awkward enough —

Princess. Not to kill each other?

Sylvia. Yes. If we should be careless and hurt each other.

Princess. Shoot off the end of the nose.

Sylvia. Perfectly frightful!

Princess. Or put out an eye!

Sylvia. Or lose a finger!

Princess. Horrible!

Sylvia. To be disfigured for life! We must think of this.

Princess. Death is nothing — but to be a cripple —

Sylvia. Wait; I have an idea just ingenious enough to suit us.

Princess. Let us hear it.

Sylvia. Do you see that little pond over there by the hill?

Princess. Perfectly. Well, what of the little pond?

Sylvia. Listen. We will play for our lives, as the college students do for the heart of a pretty chambermaid. She who loses will throw herself into the pond.

Princess (*aside*). Not a bad idea, for a savage.

Sylvia. You understand. Instead of fire —

Princess. Water — beautiful! But there is one little hinderance.

Sylvia. What?

Princess. I can swim.

Sylvia. I also.

Princess. And I will not answer that, when once in, I will not try to get out again.

Sylvia. Tie a stone to your neck.

Princess. O, no! I can suggest something better.

Sylvia. Well?

Princess. Something more worthy of our birth, our character, and our love.

Sylvia. Well?

Princess. We both love Maurice?

Sylvia. We have said so.

Princess. Blindly!

Sylvia. Yes, or enormously, or excessively, or immeasurably. There is not an adverb too strong for that verb.

Princess. Well, let us bid. (SYLVIA *looks at her, astonished. — After a moment of silence.*) Let us tell without cheating —

Sylvia. Of course.

Princess. The sacrifices we are ready to make for the man that we love.

Sylvia (*extravagantly*). Blindly!

Princess (*calmly*). Blindly. She who is not willing to do as much as the other will resign in favor of her rival.

Sylvia. Splendid! Commence.

Princess. I am willing to give up the opera.
Sylvia. I the masked balls.
Princess. I will be contented always to live in the country.
Sylvia. I always in the provinces.
Princess. To wear only my own hair.
Sylvia. To cut off all mine.
Princess. To have this tooth pulled. (*Showing a front one.*)
Sylvia. Is it genuine? (*Examining it.*)
Princess (*proudly*). It is.
Sylvia. And I this one. (*Showing one.*)
Princess. Well, I am ready to poison myself for him.
Sylvia. And I to hang myself.
Princess (*angrily*). Mademoiselle!
Sylvia. Madame! (*Noise outside.*) What noise is that? (*Goes to window.*) 'Tis Maurice. How elegant he looks on a horse. See him alight. Give up that man? Never! See that leg, the left one, now in the stirrup —
Princess. I like the other one better.
Sylvia. Give him up? Never! Two teeth!
Princess. Three teeth!
Sylvia. Four teeth!
Princess. Five teeth!
Sylvia. All my teeth! O, I could bite you!
Princess. And I could eat you! He comes; I heard him. Let us ask him to choose — that is the easiest. 'Tis he — Maurice!
Sylvia (*extravagantly*). Maurice! (MAURICE *runs in*, C. — *His foot catches on the threshold, and he falls on all fours in the middle of the stage.* — SYLVIA *and the* PRINCESS *fall into chairs*, R. *and* L., *and laugh immoderately.* — MAURICE, *on his hands and knees, looks from one to the other, but does not rise.*)
Princess (*laughing*). O, how absurd!
Sylvia (*laughing*). O, dear, I hurt myself laughing so.
Princess (*laughing*). What a position!
Sylvia (*laughing*). See his coat-tail — his coat-tail!
Princess (*picking up gloves*). Your gloves, my poor Maurice.
Sylvia (*picking up hat*). Your hat, my poor dear.
Princess. Have you hurt yourself?
Sylvia. Are you wounded?
Maurice (*rising*). Ladies, I thank you kindly; I am not hurt; I am not wounded, having fallen, not accidentally, but on purpose.
Sylvia. What do you mean?
Maurice. I knew that I had the honor to be loved by you both; but I had a vague presentiment that the love was not very serious, and that my hatter, and tailor, and horse came in for the greater part. So I thought of this ruse, saying to myself, "She who does not laugh on seeing me in a ridiculous position, will be the one who loves me. She who runs to help me, will be the one whose love comes from the heart." You have both laughed. You are both charming; but I thank you for the knowledge which permits me to marry another who really loves me, and who felt badly yesterday

when I fell accidentally in the same position which has just caused you so much mirth. You are the first I have told of my approaching marriage. (*Taking hat and gloves.*) Ladies, adieu! [*Exit*, c.

Sylvia. Insolence! I will be revenged.

Princess. Impertinence! He shall hear from me. (*They look at each other a moment, and then burst out laughing.*)

Sylvia. O, dear! didn't he look comical?

Princess. I shall never forget it. (*Clock strikes.*) Ah, the time for my fourth glass.

Sylvia. And time for my ride.

Princess. We shall meet at the ball this evening? How shall you dress?

Sylvia. In blue.

Princess. Then I shall wear pink.

Sylvia. Adieu — till this evening.

Princess. Till this evening. O, I was mistaken — I shall be in blue also.

Sylvia. Well, then, I will put on pink.

CURTAIN.

SPENCER'S UNIVERSAL STAGE.

36. **Diamond cut Diamond.** An Interlude in One Act. By W. H. Murray. 10 Male, 1 Female character.

37. **Look after Brown.** A Farce in One Act. By George A. Stuart, M. D. 6 Male, 1 Female character.

38. **Monseigneur.** A Drama in Three Acts. By Thomas Archer. 15 Male, 3 Female characters.

39. **A very pleasant Evening.** A Farce in One Act. By W. E. Suter. 3 Male characters.

40. **Brother Ben.** A Farce in One Act. By J. M. Morton. 3 Male, 3 Female characters.

41. **Only a Clod.** A Comic Drama in One Act. By J. P. Simpson. 4 Male, 1 Female character.

42. **Gaspardo the Gondolier.** A Drama in Three Acts. By George Almar. 10 Male, 2 Female characters.

43. **Sunshine through the Clouds.** A Drama in One Act. By Slingsby Lawrence. 3 Male, 3 Female characters.

44. **Don't Judge by Appearances.** A Farce in One Act. By J. M. Morton. 3 Male, 2 Female characters.

45. **Nursey Chickweed.** A Farce in One Act. By T. J. Williams. 4 Male, 2 Female characters.

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